



Kriste Lindberg <lindberk@bloomington.in.gov>

[cityhall-everyone] Press Release: City of Bloomington Utilities Accepting Proposals for 2021 Residential Stormwater Grants

Yael Ksander <ksandery@bloomington.in.gov>
Reply-To: ksandery@bloomington.in.gov
To: Yael Ksander <ksandery@bloomington.in.gov>
Bcc: cityhall-everyone@bloomington.in.gov

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For more information please contact:

Kriste Lindberg, Education Specialist, City of Bloomington Utilities, stormwater@bloomington.in.gov or 812-349-3617.

City of Bloomington Utilities Accepting Proposals for 2021 Residential Stormwater Grants

Bloomington, Ind. – The City of Bloomington Utilities Department (CBU) invites homeowners to apply for funding through the third annual Residential Stormwater Grants Program. CBU has allocated \$70,000 for the 2021 program to assist owners of single-family residential property with environmentally-friendly drainage projects such as rain gardens, bioswales, and detention pond maintenance. CBU will host a public information meeting about the grant application process and project requirements via video conferencing on **Tuesday, January 19, 6 – 7 p.m.** This information will be recorded and available on the CBU grants webpage at www.bloomington.in.gov/utilities/stormwater/grants.

The grant program provides small grants to homeowners for sustainable stormwater infrastructure projects on private residential property. These projects are expected to improve the management of stormwater before it enters local waterways or the City's stormwater conveyance infrastructure known as the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4). Localized flooding can occur when the MS4 infrastructure receives more water than it can accommodate in a short period of time. Also, the water that flows into storm drains and through the MS4 doesn't get treated, so it transports pollutants from the urban landscape directly into our local waterways.

Prospective applicants are encouraged to submit an optional Letter of Intent by **5 p.m. on Monday, February 1, 2021** before the application to help with project planning. Applications must be submitted by **5**

p.m. on Monday, March 1, 2021. Both the Letter of Intent (optional) and Application may be submitted online at bloomington.in.gov/utilities/stormwater/grants

Funding for the program comes from the stormwater fee approved by City Council in 2018. Nearly one quarter of the stormwater revenue funds green infrastructure improvements, such as installing environmentally-friendly infrastructure in City projects when “grey” infrastructure would traditionally be used. Along with the residential grants, these projects will contribute to improved stormwater management in the whole community.

In 2020, \$70,000 was allocated to the Residential Stormwater Grants Program and a total of 16 projects were funded. Projects ranged from around \$2,000 to \$8,000 and included rain gardens, dry creek beds, and drainage stabilization projects. The amount allocated to the program remains the same for the 2021 budget.

“This partnership with property owners works to control flooding, protect our waterways, and mitigate future damage in environmentally responsible ways,” said Mayor John Hamilton. “Through this program, residents can play an important role in reducing our collective impact on the environment.”

An appointed committee, including members of the public, will rank the applications and decide which projects to fund and how much funding each will receive. Projects will be ranked and selected based on their potential to improve drainage and reduce the amount of pollutants discharged into our waterways. Projects containing “greener” stormwater solutions will rank more favorably.

For more information and alternate submittal options, please contact Kriste Lindberg via email at stormwater@bloomington.in.gov or phone at (812) 349-3617.

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